

Catalogue no. 81-599-X — Issue no. 003

ISSN: 1709-8653

ISBN: 978-1-100-13975-3

## Fact Sheet

### Education Indicators in Canada

# Postsecondary Enrolment and Graduation



October 2009

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## Postsecondary Enrolment and Graduation

In the *Learn Canada 2020* declaration, ministers of education underlined “the direct link between a well-educated population and (1) a vibrant knowledge-based economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, (2) a socially progressive, sustainable society, and (3) enhanced personal growth opportunities for all Canadians.” Postsecondary education is an increasingly important element in realizing this vision. This fact sheet looks at enrolment in and graduation from registered apprenticeship programs, and programs offered at colleges<sup>1</sup> and universities. It also examines differences in the proportions of men and women among students and graduates for these types of education, and within different fields of study.

### Registered apprenticeships

The demand for skilled workers can have an effect on participation in and completion of apprenticeship programs. There has been a strong increase in the number of individuals registered in apprenticeship programs. In 2007, there were 358,555 registered apprentices in Canada, compared to 199,075 in 2000, an average annual increase of 8.8% over this period<sup>2</sup> (Table D.1.1 and Chart 1).

Growth has not been reflected quite as strongly in the number of completions. Between 2000 and 2007, the number of apprenticeship completers increased at about half the rate observed for registered apprentices (4.2% per year). In terms of actual numbers, 24,495 people completed their apprenticeship training in Canada in 2007 (Table D.2.1 and Chart 1). Upward trends in the number of apprenticeship completions are evident in some but not all provinces (Table D.2.1).

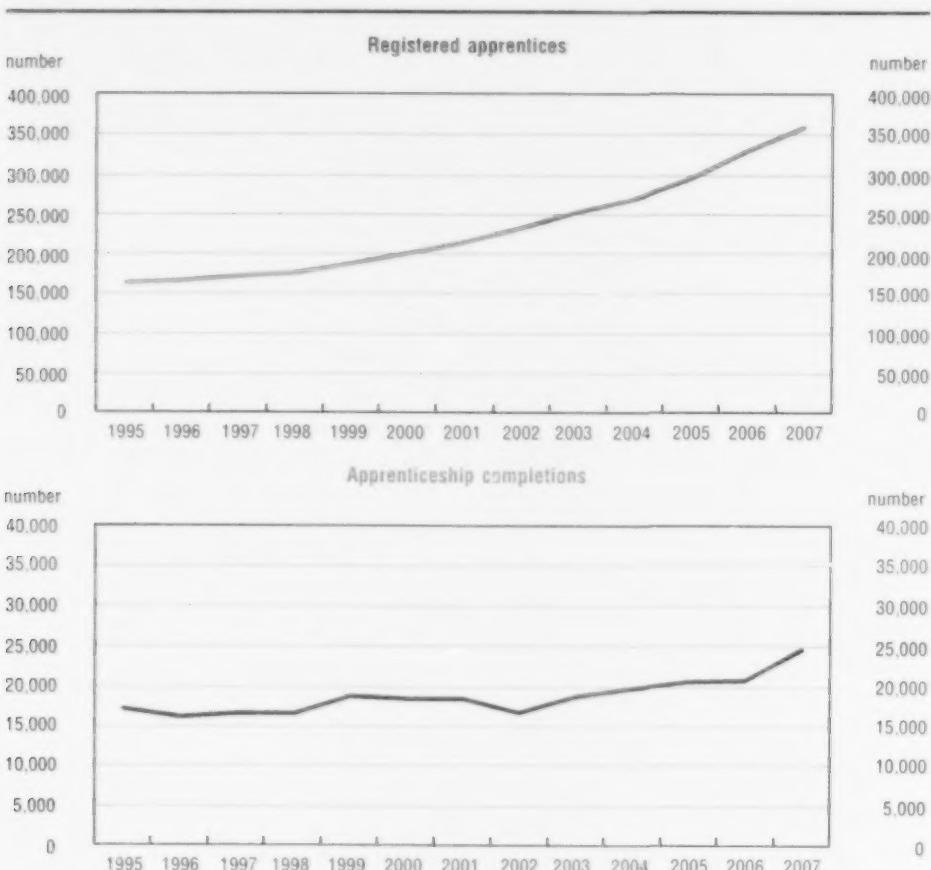
### College

Colleges support access to postsecondary education for people from all regions of Canada and meet varying educational and training needs for students and employers. In the 2005/2006 academic year<sup>3</sup>, there were 531,972 full- and part-time students enrolled in certificate, diploma, and degree programs in colleges throughout Canada<sup>4</sup> (Table D.1.4). Between 2000/2001 and 2005/2006, enrolment in these college programs increased, on average, 0.7% per year.

1. These institutions include public colleges of applied arts and technology, technical institutes, Collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel (Cégep), and similar institutes.
2. The average annual increases presented in this fact sheet are calculated as compound annual averages.
3. Enrolments for colleges and universities are reported for the academic year, based on counts in the fall of that year. Total numbers of graduates are reported by academic year for colleges, and by calendar year for universities.
4. This consists of the following categories in Table D.1.4: College certificate or diploma and other college level; undergraduate; and graduate.

Chart 1

Number of registered apprentices and registered apprenticeship completions,  
Canada, 1995 to 2007



**Note:** The number of registered apprentices includes those still registered from the previous year plus the newly registered apprentices from the current year and includes apprentices that have not yet completed or withdrawn from training.

**Source:** Statistics Canada and Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. October 2009. *Education Indicators in Canada: Report of the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program*. Catalogue no. 81-582-X. Ottawa. Tables D.1.1 and D.2.1. Statistics Canada. Registered Apprenticeship Information System.

Colleges in Canada granted 161,304 diplomas, certificates and degrees in 2004/2005, up from 138,063 in 2000/2001, an average annual increase of 4% (Table D.2.3).

## University

In universities, there were 978,480 students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate programs in Canada in the 2007/2008 academic year—over four-fifths (83%) of whom were enrolled at the undergraduate level (Table D.1.5.2). In addition to these students, there were students taking undergraduate degree programs in colleges (excluding university transfer students), almost all of them in Ontario, Alberta, and British

Columbia (Table D.1.4). Their numbers for 2007/2008 are not known yet but there were 21,390 in 2005/2006 (latest year of data available for colleges).

In 2007/2008, 165,789 graduate students were enrolled in Canadian universities. This represents an average annual increase of 5% since 2000/2001, a faster rate of growth than at the undergraduate level (3.1% per annum) (Table D.1.5.2).

As college and university enrolments have increased so has the number of credentials granted by these postsecondary institutions in Canada. In terms of credentials granted by universities, master's, and bachelor's and first professional degrees increased by 5.7% and 5.2% respectively per year between 2001 and 2007, while earned doctorate degrees increased 4.5% (Table D.2.3).

## Field of study

Data on graduation by field of study<sup>5</sup> provide information about the number and mix of persons with recently acquired, specialized skills and knowledge that can be applied in the labour market.

In 2007, two fields of study had the highest numbers of university graduates in Canada as a whole: social and behavioural sciences, and law; and business, management and public administration. These were the largest fields of study in almost every province. At the country level, the following three categories were tied at third in terms of their share of graduates: education; humanities; and health, parks, recreation and fitness (Table D.2.8.2 and Chart 3).

Among community colleges, the physical and life sciences, and technologies category accounted for 23% of the graduates. Humanities represented 18%; health, parks, recreation and fitness, 15% (in 2004/2005) (latest year of data available) (Table D.2.9 and Chart 2).

## Male–female patterns

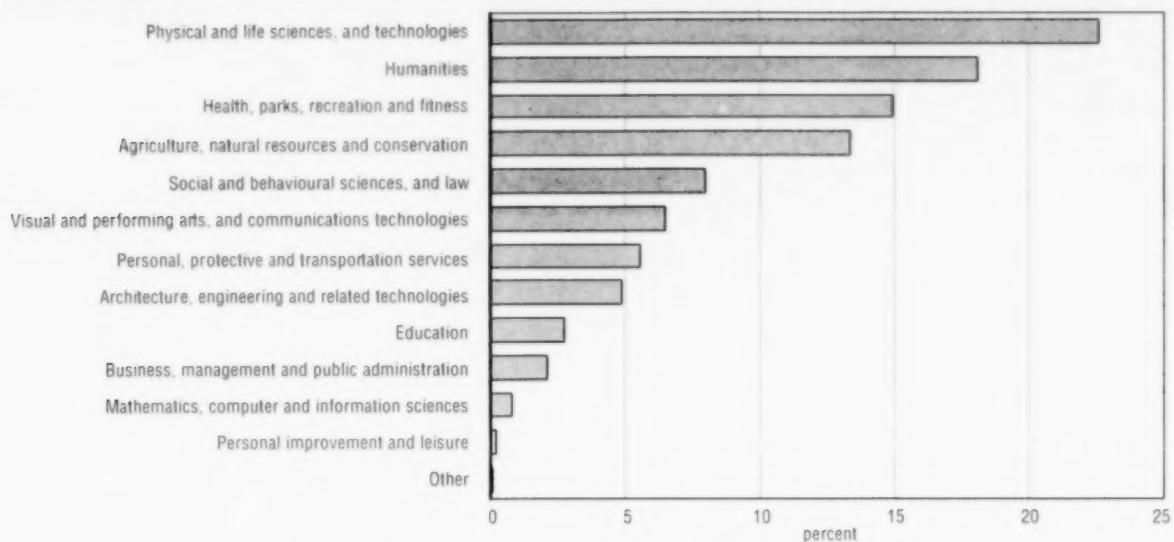
The world of apprenticeship is still largely dominated by men. Women accounted for only 11% of completers of registered apprenticeship programs in 2007, similar to the situation in 2000. Female apprentices continue to be concentrated in the food and service trade group (Table D.2.2).

The picture at the college, and especially the university, levels is quite different. Men have accounted for a minority of students in colleges and undergraduate programs in universities for some time across all provinces. In 2007/2008, men comprised 43% and 49% of the full-time university undergraduate and graduate student bodies, respectively (Table D.1.6.2). In colleges in 2005/2006 (latest year available), they represented 45% of full-time students in diploma and certificate programs (Table D.1.7). In terms of credentials granted, men attained 39% of all university degrees/diplomas/certificates granted in 2007, and 41% of college degrees/diplomas/certificates granted in 2004/2005 (Tables D.2.8.2 and D.2.9, respectively).

5. Field of study refers to a discipline or area of learning or training. Each field of study groups together instructional programs according to the Classification of Instructional Programs 2000 (CIP), the official classification used at Statistics Canada. CIP can be used to classify programs at each level of postsecondary education.

## Chart 2

Percentage distribution of college degrees/diplomas/certificates granted, by field of study,  
Canada 2004/2005

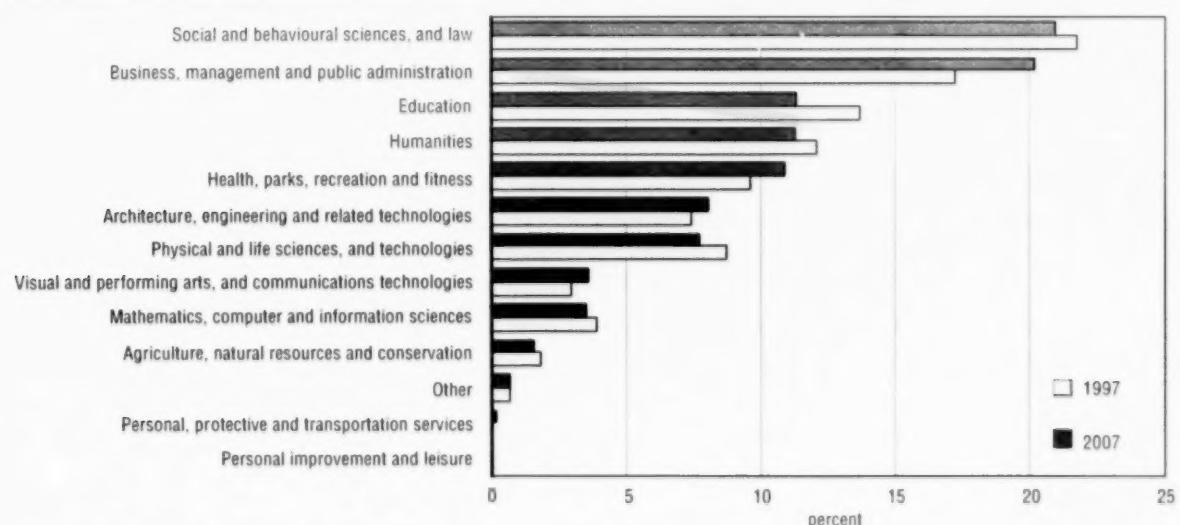


**Note:** There is a break in the college data series starting in 2000; data before this time are not directly comparable.

**Source:** Statistics Canada and Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, October 2009. *Education Indicators in Canada: Report of the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program*. Catalogue no. 81-582-X. Ottawa. Table D.2.9.

## Chart 3

Percentage distribution of university degrees/diplomas/certificates granted, by field of study, Canada,  
1997 and 2007



**Source:** Statistics Canada and Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, October 2009. *Education Indicators in Canada: Report of the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program*. Catalogue no. 81-582-X. Ottawa. Tables D.2.7.2 and D.2.8.2.

Representation of men and women differs by field of study. Among 2007 university graduates, the proportions of women were lower than for men only in the architecture, engineering and related technologies field (24%); mathematics, computer and information sciences (30%); and personal, protective and transportation services (48%) (Table D.2.7.2). The proportion of women in the mathematics, computer and information sciences field declined over the decade; in 1997, the proportion was 33% (Tables D.2.7.2 and D.2.8.2).

Among college graduates in 2004/2005, women accounted for 54% of the graduates in the field of mathematics, computer and information sciences, but only for 25% in the field of architecture, engineering and related technologies group (Table D.2.9).

For more detailed information, and to see the specific data referred to in this fact sheet, as well as other tables of data relating to education in Canada, please see the D.1 and D.2 tables series released on October 28, 2009.

The university and college data discussed in this fact sheet are obtained from Statistics Canada's Postsecondary Student Information System (PSIS) (and its predecessor surveys). PSIS is a census of all public postsecondary institutions in Canada. Data on registered apprentices and completers of registered apprenticeship programs are provided by provincial/territorial apprenticeship branches to Statistics Canada's Registered Apprenticeship Information System (RAIS). Please refer to the Statistics Canada Web site ([www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)) for more information on these surveys. From the Statistics Canada home page, select "Definitions, data sources and methods," and then the appropriate survey from the alphabetical list under the "Surveys and statistical programs" heading.

The most recent year of data available differs for RAIS and for PSIS. The latest reference year also varies between the PSIS college and university data, mainly because of differences in the processing schedules of data from these systems in the last few years (however, coordinated reference years are anticipated for future rounds of data).

The average annual growth rate is the compound growth rate calculated between end points of the period.

The Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program (PCEIP<sup>9</sup>) is an ongoing initiative of the Canadian Education Statistics Council, a partnership between Statistics Canada and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), to provide a set of statistical measures on education systems in Canada.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the work of the PCEIP team at Statistics Canada and at the CMEC Secretariat, as well as the assistance of the provincial-territorial members of the Strategic Management Committee of the Canadian Education Statistics Council in reviewing the material. Thank you also to the Centre for Education Statistics at Statistics Canada for providing the data.

